THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY): (a) No, Sir. Inter-country adoption of orphan/abandoned and surrendered children is governed by Guidelines for Adoption from India 2006 and as per the guidelines, children are placed for inter-country adoption only when they could not be placed in domestic adoption despite due efforts.

(b) It would not be correct to correlate inter-country adoption with incidents like Nithari killings.

(c) While CARA has linkages with every State, in some of the States the adoption programme is not sufficiently active.

(d) Adoption of orphan/abandoned and surrendered children is strictly regulated under the In-country Guidelines, 2004 and the Guidelines for Adoption from India, 2006. These guidelines are aimed at deterring selling of children in lieu of adoption. Follow up action after adoption is also provided in these guidelines.

Widows and abandoned women

2292. DR. GYAN PRAKASH PILANIA: Will the Minister of WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) the total number of widows and women abandoned or divorced by their husbands in the country, category-wise;

(b) whether Government have done any country-wide survey to assess the number and condition of such women;

(c) how Government propose to help them to lead a dignified life and make them economically self-reliant; and

(d) the details about the pension/grants being provided to them at present and whether it could be termed as adequate?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY): (a) According to Census, 2001 there were about 342.90 lakh widowed women aged 10+ in the country and 23.43 lakh divorced or separated women.

(b) Ministry of Women and Child Development has advised the State Governments to formulate a time bound programme to establish Swadhar Shelter Homes in urban, rural and remote areas for women in difficult circumstances who are without any social or economic support, on the basis of number of widows/ divorced/separated women of different ages, rural and urban, as per Census 2001 and report of the Sample Registration System brought out by the Registrar General of India. The Swadhar scheme provides holistic and integrated services to such women including shelter, food, clothing and care. The objective of the scheme is to rehabilitate them socially and economically. Ministry of Women and Child Development has no separate scheme to provide pension to such women.